

**DANIEL CHAPTER SEVEN  
AND A BRIEF LOOK AT OUR CULTURAL HANDICAPS  
IN APPROPRIATING DANIEL'S VISION**

by

**Joseph B. Bustillos**

*Box #456*

**A Paper Submitted to Dr. James T. Butler  
of the School of Theology**

**of Fuller Theological Seminary**

**OT 504: Old Testament Writings**

**March 6<sup>th</sup>**

**1985**

FULLER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
INTER-CAMPUS  
STUDENT BOX DELIVERY SLIP

DATE: 4/3/85

TO: J. Bustillos

BOX #: 456

FROM: JT Butta

BOX #: 249

DANIEL CHAPTER SEVEN:  
PART I: EXEGESIS

INTRODUCTION

There are many problems to be dealt with in exegeting the book of Daniel, and as I begin this paper I would like to bring the major ones to the foreground. Paramount to developing a balanced exegesis of Daniel is the need to contend with the theological presuppositions regarding supernaturalism and one's understanding of Inerrancy. Because of the nature of the book one's attitude towards these theological concepts must be openly taken into account before one begins one's study. To some the idea of a biblical book containing six "edifying stories" (midrashic, fictional tales) and several so-called prophetic visions that are really nothing more than vaticinia ex eventu<sup>1</sup> would not violate their conception of Inerrancy (in this case, the concept of supernaturalism is neither here nor there). To others this would seem to be an open denial of the Faith.<sup>2</sup> It is not the purpose, however, of this paper to bolster either perspectives. My purpose is to present the message of the seventh chapter of Daniel and to let the answers to our questions fall where they will. ✓ *any view of Scripture must be inductively based - i.e., must examine Scripture for what it is*

Another problem in dealing with Daniel is one of not having sufficient historical data available on this period of history. Because this is a consistent reality (practically all of the Old Testament narratives fall under this umbrella) one has to maintain an open attitude toward the text's self-testimony and

weigh whatever external evidence that there is carefully. A final problem in exegeting the book of Daniel is the overwhelming sense that one is attempting to empty an ocean with a single thimble. The shear number of works published relating to this subject, plus the breadth of opinions voiced, plus the extremely limited amount of time available to examine the evidence has the tendency of placing one somewhere between ✓ "enlightened humility" and complete confusion. It is with all of this in mind that I add my insights to a subject that has fully employed an army of scholars who have probably forgotten more than I shall ever comprehend.

## **STRUCTURE**

The book of Daniel can be divided along two lines. The first would be the book's bilingual nature: 1:1-2:4a and 8:1-12:13 is in Hebrew while 2:4b-7:28 is in Aramaic.<sup>3</sup> The second line of division is between basic literary sections: 1:1-6:28 is essentially narrative and 7:1-12:13 contains prophetic visions (some would add Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter 2).

### **OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL** **PART I: THE STORIES**

Hebrew:

#### **I. PROLOGUE: THE SETTING (1:1-21)**

-----  
Aramaic:

#### **II. THE NATIONS AND THE MOST HIGH GOD (2:1-7:28)**

A0. Nebuchadnezzar dreams of four kingdoms and of God's kingdom (chapter 2).

B0. Nebuchadnezzar the tyrant sees God's servants rescues (chapter 3).

C0. Judgement of Nebuchadnezzar (chapter 4).

C1. Judgement on Belshazzar (chapter 5).

B1. Darius the Mede sees Daniel rescued (chapter 6).

## PART II: THE VISIONS

- Al. Daniel has a vision of four kingdoms and of God's kingdom (chapter 7).
- 

Hebrew:

- III. DANIEL'S VISION OF THE RAM AND THE HE-GOAT (chapter 8).  
IV. DANIEL'S PRAYER AND THE VISION OF THE 70 "WEEKS"  
(chapter 9).  
V. VISION OF THE HEAVENLY MESSENGER AND HIS FINAL  
REVELATION (chapters 10 through 12).<sup>3</sup>

Some have felt that the obvious divisions between the Hebrew and the Aramaic sections as well as between the narrative and prophetic-visions section point to multiple authors stretched out over a long period of time (possibly one writer sometime after the sixth century recording the exploits of Daniel in the foreign courts and then others adding the second century visions later). Baldwin feels that the very structure of the book points to one author (she thinks sixth century). She bases this on the echoing (?cha)stic structure of the chapters. Chapters two and seven present the Four Empires motif, chapters three and six portray the rescuing of God's servants at the hands of Gentile monarchs, and finally chapters four and five deal with the judgement of God on Gentile rulers (chapters eight through twelve expand on the Four Empire motif).<sup>4</sup>

Chapter seven, itself, stands as an intersection between both the language structures and the literary structures of the book. This chapter stands as a unit much like the book. The progression of thought and the weaving of subject-matter binds the chapter together as a unit.<sup>5</sup>

## OUTLINE OF DANIEL CHAPTER 7

### I. DREAM OF THE FOUR BEASTS

- A. Introduction (vss 1-3)
- B. FIRST BEAST: "the Lion" (vs 4)
  - 1. eagles wings (torn off and . . .)
  - 2. stood on its feet like a man
  - 3. heart like a man.
- C. SECOND BEAST: "the Bear" (vs 5)
  - 1. raised up on one side
  - 2. three ribs in its teeth
  - 3. commanded to eat until it's full.
- D. THIRD BEAST: "the Leopard" (vs 6)
  - 1. four wings (like a bird's)
  - 2. four heads
  - 3. given authority.
- E. FOURTH BEAST: "the Terrifying Unnamed Beast" (vss 7-8)
  - 1. large iron teeth
  - 2. crushed and devoured, trampled what was left
  - 3. ten horns
    - a. a little horn
      - 1) uprooted three kings
      - 2) eyes of a man
      - 3) spoke boastfully.
- F. HEAVENLY COURT: "The Ancient of Days" (vss 9-12)
  - 1. on his throne
    - b. white clothing/hair
    - c. flaming presence
    - d. the throng around the throne
  - 2. judgement (court seated and books opened)
    - a. fourth beast slain (with little horn) and thrown into the fire.
    - b. other beasts stripped of their power, but allowed to remain.
- G. An Everlasting Kingdom (vss 13-14)
  - 1. The Son of Man
    - a. with the clouds of heaven
    - b. led into the presence of the Ancient of Days
    - c. receives the Kingdom
      - 1) authority, glory sovereignty over all peoples, nations
      - 2) everlasting dominion (never destroyed)
    - d. worshipped by men of every language.

### II. THE INTERPRETATION OF THE DREAM (vss 15-28)

- A. Daniel troubled, asks "one standing there" for an interpretation (vss 15-18)
  - 1. Four Beasts = Four Kingdoms
  - 2. "saints of the Most High" will receive the everlasting "kingdom"
- B. Questions about the Fourth Beast (vss 19-22)
  - 1. reasons for concern about fourth beast
    - a. different from the others
      - 1) iron teeth and bronze claws
      - 2) left no survivors
    - b. ten horns, the little horn

- 1) defeating the saints
  - 2) Ancient of Days delivers them and gives them the kingdom
- C. Answers about the Fourth Beast and the Everlasting Kingdom (vss 23-27)
1. Fourth Beast
    - a. Fourth Beast=fourth kingdom
    - b. it will devour the whole earth
    - c. ten horns=ten kings
    - d. the tenth king
      - 1) subdues three kings
      - 2) speaks out against the Most High
      - 3) oppresses the saints and the Temple Cult
  2. The Everlasting Kingdom
    - a. the court is set (judgement)
      - 1) tenth king (of the Fourth kingdom) is overthrown and destroyed
      - 2) the kingdom is given to the saints, the people of the Most High
        - a) "sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven"
        - b) everlasting kingdom
      - 3) all rulers will worship and obey "him"
- D. Daniel is troubled by the matter but keeps it to himself.

A verse by verse analysis (actually theme by theme) will be addressed when I deal with the language of the text.

## GENRE

The issue of the genre of chapter seven on the surface appears to be a simple one. All voices seem to concur that what we have before us is Apocalyptic literature.<sup>7</sup> All seems well and good until someone asks what we mean by Apocalyptic literature.<sup>8</sup> It degenerates even further when the question is asked regarding the origin or relationship between Apocalyptic literature and the rest of Scripture. Norman Porteous writes with regards to the book of Daniel and "mythical search for the origin of the genre" in Scripture:

Perhaps the wisest course is to take the Book of Daniel as a distinctive piece of literature with a clearly defined witness of its own, and to take note of the various ways in which it borrows from and is coloured by the earlier prophetic literature, the Wisdom literature and the Psalms and has its successors in the apocalypses, though these often exhibit an extravagance and a fantastic imagination which prominent in the Book of Daniel.<sup>9</sup>

^  
?

## LANGUAGE

*This is not necessarily a good indicator of words meriting closer study.*

In checking the number of times a word was used in the English text of chapter seven (NIV) I didn't find anything that seemed out of the ordinary. The word "Beast(s)" occurred thirteen times, "Horn(s)" occurred eleven time, "Kingdom(s)" occurred ten times and "King(s)" occurred all of four times.

The theme of night visions or dreams cross references very strongly with the stories of Joseph in the Egyptian court (Gen 37:1-11, 40:1-41:40, note the possible influence of Wisdom literature with reference to Daniel's court experiences)<sup>10</sup> and Zechariah's night visions (Zech 1:8ff).

Regarding one of the more difficult verses to understand, Baldwin and Hartman both note that the bear that "was raised up on one of its sides" in verse five "makes no sense, and should be seen to be standing on its hind legs."<sup>11</sup> With regards to verses four and five Hartman continues by noting a theory proposed by H.L. Ginsberg:

Ginsberg recognized: . . . that in the description of the first two beasts, the words which the MT uses in reference to the lion, "It raised one end upright, to stand on two feet like a man" (in vs. 4 of MT), really belong to the description of the bear; and the words that the MT

uses in reference to the bear, "It had three tusks in its mouth [between its teeth], and it was given the command: 'Up, devour much flesh!'" (in vs. 5 of MT), really belong to the description of the lion. . . "12

One of the most heatedly debated themes presented in this chapter is the "Son of Man" passage which begins in verse thirteen. Baldwin and DiLella devote a full section on the subject.<sup>13</sup> McDowell, in typical Fundamentalist fashion, pins the full validity of the Christian Faith on whether the phrase refers to Jesus Christ or not (and of course it does).<sup>14</sup> The consensus seems to be that the phrase is primarily used in a generic sense to address one as a human being, a "son of man" or even "son of Adam." DiLella goes even further and identifies the "son of man" as Israel (this is largely because the "saints of the Most High" ✓ are said to receive the kingdom in verse twenty-seven whereas the ~~recipient~~? recipient(s) of the kingdom in verse fourteen).<sup>15</sup> The value of the term, then, if it is to be understood in its adopted<sup>?</sup> in a Christological sense is a picture of Christ's identification and relationship with mankind: "He says, 'I will declare your name to my brothers; in the presence of the congregation I will sing your praises.'" (Heb 2:12)

One last thing to note is a pattern found in this chapter which is Daniel's desire to know the identity of the Fourth Beast and the Angel's persistent emphasis on the Everlasting kingdom that will be given to the Son of Man/Saints of the Most High.

## THE EMPIRES STRIKE BACK (The Who's Who of Daniel Chapter Seven)

This portion of the assignment has the strange aura about it like the feeling one gets at a carnival booth during a nervous blind date. "Here you go, son. Here's the five ping-pong balls, now let's see if you can get all of them to fit on the rims of those four milk bottles over there." Nothing like a little "Theological Musical Chairs." }

The task of identifying the four kingdoms symbolized by Daniel's vision of four beasts is one usually left to Dispensationalists or those unfortunate individuals (not necessarily Dispensationalists) in the third year of their sentence to Purgatory. Nonetheless I will attempt to identify the indecipherable with the unknowable. Listed below are the two major (i.e., popular) hypotheses followed by two good shots in the dark:

#1: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. This set up is favored by Baldwin and McDowell.<sup>16</sup> On the plus side it seems to correspond to Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter two, it follows the known chronology of the four empires (i.e., Daniel didn't screw up his history), and it tends to uphold the prophetic nature of chapter eleven. On the minus side it leaves us without a clue about who the "Little Horn" is in chapter seven (but that's the Anti-Christ anyway, so who cares?).

#2: Babylon, Media, Persia and Greece. This view is favored by Hartman and Porteous.<sup>17</sup> On the plus side it seems to correspond to Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter two, we know who the "Little Horn" is, and it fits the book's emphasis of events that

transpired during the second and third centuries (chapter eleven). On the minus side it makes the author look like he doesn't know his own history. *depending upon when he was living, I could*

#3a: Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia and Greece. This option is proposed by yours truly for the following reasons: a. Both DiLella and Baldwin quote J.W. Swain regarding a theory about a "Four World Empires" motif that was ~~pervalent~~<sup>pervalent</sup> view of history in Daniel's day,<sup>18</sup> thus A, B, M-P, G fits the four empire motif just as well as B, M, P, G or B, M-P, G, R; b. Conversely, if one of the purposes of the vision is to show God's sovereignty in the affairs of kings and kingdoms, the idea that the first kingdom had been supplanted at the time the vision was given doesn't hurt the message; c. Nothing in this chapter indicates that the kingdoms must parallel those in chapter two, nor that Babylon has to be the first kingdom (which follows the original motifs' inclusion of Assyria); d. The identity of the little horn is less of a mystery; e. It retains the "historical" integrity of Daniel's chronology; f. And nothing in chapters seven or eight indicates that Medo-Persia and Greece have to be beasts two and three respectively (contrary to Baldwin, p. 147). On the minus side it seems to contradict the kingdoms identified in chapter two,<sup>19</sup> and to my knowledge no scholar holds to this position. *This was proposed by Ewald - G. HH Pawley, Derives the Mark...*

#3b: Babylon, Media, Medo-Persia and Greece. This view is held *88f.* by the same multitude that holds to #3a. On the plus side it is the same as #3a with the addition: g. Nothing in chapter seven negates the idea of overlapping "empires."

## CONCLUSIONS

The theme that continually echoes throughout the course of this book is strongly vocalized by the "Three Jewish Children" before they were pitched into Nebuchadnezzar's furnace in chapter three and the Revealing Angel in chapter seven (respectively):

O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up. - Daniel 3:16-18

He [the little horn] will speak against the Most High and oppress his saints and try to change the set times and the laws. The saints will be handed over to him for a time, times and half a time. But the court will sit, and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever. Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him. - Daniel 7:25-27

DANIEL CHAPTER SEVEN:  
PART II: REFLECTION:

A Brief Look At The Our Cultural Handicaps  
In Appropriating Daniel's Visions Today

"Cruisin' down the highway late one night  
thinkin' 'bout the world and the shape it's in  
Nation against nation, military might  
thankful for the peace that I have within.

"Too many people love to hate each other,  
the love of many is growing cold  
We should be honoring our fathers and mother  
as it is written, it all unfolds.

"But it's alright!  
Just like a rocket, I'll be flyin' high,  
Just like a shooting star, racin' through the sky.

". . . it's alright!  
Jesus is coming, He's coming for me  
He's gonna pick me up in His arms,  
He's gonna set me free --- Alright!"<sup>20</sup>

The plight of the People of God, whether it was during the Exile of the sixth century in Mesopotamia or their second century Holocaust at the hands of Antiochus Epiphanies IV, they were bent under a burden that generated a different spirit or cry from the one found in the song listed above.

"Jerusalem was uninhabited, like a desert;  
not one of her children entered or came out.

The sanctuary was trampled on,  
and foreigners were in the citadel;  
it was a habitation of Gentiles.

Joy had disappeared from Jacob,  
and the flute and the harp were silent."

- 1 Maccabees 3:45

As they saw the Temple burn to the ground and found themselves in a foreign land, they tasted the salt as wave upon foreign wave tossed them deeper into chaos and further from the Beautiful Land. It was not the smoke from some nebulous distant fire that

they feared but the burning inside of them that said they had been abandoned.

"Why have you rejected us forever, O God?  
Why does your anger smolder against the sheep of your pasture?  
Remember the people you purchased of old,  
the tribe you redeemed as your inheritance ---  
Mount Zion, where you dwelt."  
- Psalm 74: 1-2

It was now over fifty years since Daniel had been deported to Babylon. And one night he has a dream, a strange vision filled with carnivorous beasts. He finds himself understandably disturbed. The reality of his exile has now invaded his dreams. From God he seeks meaning to these chaotic smokings of his subconsciousness. And like a Psalm of Lament his dream pours out suffering but God responds with words of ultimate hope and assurance. No real word about when, just the assurance that one day . . .

In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.  
- Daniel 7:13-14

We turn the page and find Contemporary Christianity in Southern California. We are now fifteen years removed from being the social rejects that we were in '60s and today we seem to find ourselves becoming important social movers (all the while we absentmindedly hope to vacate this planet before it blows up. "Beam me up Scotty, this planet sucks.") There must be a certain madness in us that makes us think that we can look into Daniel's visions and understand various things, such as the soon coming

discovery of oil in the land of Israel or that Iran and Lybia will cause such an imbalance of power in the Middle East that Russia will attack Israel.<sup>21</sup> Perhaps in our sincere desire to see the meaningfulness in every bit of the Word of God we have overlooked what made it meaningful to the original recipients. / Perhaps there was a time when we could understand the longings and frustrations in Daniel's heart, the thing that drove him to his knees in chapter nine. Maybe back in the '60s when we saw society as a kind of cardboard Babylon that was heaping war and destruction on an innocent race of people that didn't care this way or that about Capitalism and Communism, maybe then we caught a glimpse of what Daniel longed for. But now . . . now I find too often that we really do not stand apart from Society, all we do now is ~~ch~~aricature it as it does us.

I was a part of the generation that persistently asked, "When will be the time of your coming?" I have the unwholesome feeling that those of my contemporaries that are still calling themselves Christians<sup>22</sup> have yet to hear the biblical answer to that question that was so close to our hearts.

It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.  
- Acts 1:7-8

Sometimes it seem like "a great chasm has been fixed between" us and Daniel, a chasm "not made by human hands." Whether we like it or not, with our IBM Personal Computers<sup>tm</sup> and our two cars per family upbringings, we are more than just centuries away from Daniel and his strange visions. You see, in

our preoccupation to develop eschatological time-lines and discern the signs of the times and to just plain try to guarantee that we get a seat on that plane that'll be leaving this place when the planet blows up, we forget that Daniel (or even the Apocalypse of John) is essentially about God acting in the course of human history and that his message to us even in the midst of loss and human suffering is one of joy and the fulfillment of his perfect will.

Maybe I've made too much about our cultural differences; Cultures are just human expressions of a collection of basic human beliefs, and the Word of God is something that goes way beyond all that. But the thing is that we are still in the midst of it. "We see through a glass darkly" which has a way of distorting our vision and making this thing so confusing.

So in the midst of our sufferings, as in the midst of theirs, the Word of the Lord to us, the Children of His Covenant, is: "Come to me all you who are weak and heavy laden and I will give you rest."

See, your paper reflects your deep personal resonance with this issue, and this involvement is good in itself. It may be, though, that it has prevented you from getting into the assignment as far as you could have. Your analysis, for instance, is largely devoted to identifying the beast/kingdoms and does very little with the language of ch. 7. Your reflection also lacks the awareness that some dialogue with other thinkers on the subject would have given it.

(B)

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Alexander A. DiLella and Louis F. Hartman, The Book of Daniel, The Anchor Bible, vol. 23 (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1978), pp. 3 & 46.

<sup>2</sup>"Now it should be clearly understood that even a partial acceptance of this radical theory concerning the composition of Daniel carries with it grave implications as to the foundations of the Christian faith," Josh McDowell, Daniel in the Critic's Den (San Bernadino, California: Campus Crusade for Christ International, 1979), p. 2. *Great stuff!*

<sup>3</sup>DiLella p. 14. DiLella presents a theory that the whole book was originally written in Aramaic and later switched to its present H-A-H format to insure the book's inclusion into the Canon.

<sup>4</sup>Adapted from Joyce G. Baldwin, Daniel, The Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, vol. 21 (Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter Varsity Press, 1978), p. 75.

<sup>5</sup>Baldwin, pp. 59ff.

<sup>6</sup>As a non-Hebraist I am at a disadvantage in finding seams in the text. Some scholars find an interpolation behind every change of subject, eg., Norman W. Porteous, Daniel, The Old Testament Library, (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: The Westminster Press, 1965), p. 96, first paragraph.

<sup>7</sup>Baldwin pp. 46ff, DiLella pp. 62ff.

<sup>8</sup>Leon Morris, Apocalyptic, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1972). This whole book (101 pages) is a survey of what is meant by "Apocalyptic literature."

*A better source on the general question is the new work by JS Collins in the FOTL series.*

<sup>9</sup>Porteous p. 16.

<sup>10</sup>DeLella pp. 55-61.

<sup>11</sup>Baldwin p. 138, Hartman p. 205. Note: Louis Hartman worked on the commentary for chapters one through nine before passing away, and DiLella finished up the book. That's why, though I'm referring to the same commentary (The Anchor Bible), I list Hartman's name instead of DiLella's.

<sup>12</sup>H.L. Ginsberg Studies in Daniel; "The Composition of the Book of Daniel," VT 4 (1954), pp. 5-23, 63-75, as quoted by Hartman p. 209.

<sup>13</sup>Baldwin pp. 148-154, DiLella pp. 85-102 & 218-219.

<sup>14</sup>McDowell p. 3. He seems to forget that proper hermeneutics require an interpretation that is at least remotely appreciable by the author's original audience.

<sup>15</sup>DiLella pp. 85-102.

<sup>16</sup>Baldwin p. 147, McDowell pp. 22ff.

<sup>17</sup>DiLella pp. 29ff, Porteous pp. 45ff.

<sup>18</sup>J.W. Swain, "The Theory of the Four Monarchies: Opposition History under the Roman Empire," Classical Philology 35 (1940), pp 1-21 as quoted in Baldwin p. 38, and DiLella p. 31.

<sup>19</sup>In defence of this apparent contradiction, the use of symbols and images within a single literary unit are often multireferential (though this is not true in the book of Daniel) but to find it used between two distinct literary units should not present any problems (consider Christ's use of symbols in his Kingdom parables; I know dispensationalists understand the symbols to be unireferential, but that shows a poor understanding of simile). See DiLella pp. 89ff on the use of symbols in the Song of Man passages (also Morris pp.36ff and D.S. Russell, The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic, The Old Testament Library, (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: The Westminster Press, 1965), pp. 122-127).

<sup>20</sup>John & Lynda Mehler, & Billy Batstone, Alright, copyright 1982, Maranatha!Music.

<sup>21</sup>If I could document those last two statements I don't know that I would. The first one I heard on a Christian radio station and the second one I just made up (which means that if it should happen, remember you read about it here first). Excursis: Why would Russia invade Israel anyway? Are they having a shortage of rocks or is this their way of saying "We miss you" to the Russian Jews that migrated to Israel? Oh . . . Never mind.

<sup>22</sup>John Gager has something to say about the short lifespan of Millennialistic movements and how they either die out or give way to other concerns. John G. Gager, Kingdom and Community: The Social World of Early Christianity, Prentice-Hall Studies in Religion Series, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975). ✓

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Baldwin, Joyce G. Daniel: An Introduction & Commentary. Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, vol. 21. Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter-Varsity Press, 1978.
- Collins, John J. Daniel, With An Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature. The Forms of the Old Testament Literature, vol. 20. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1984.
- Davies, Philip R. "Eschatology in the Book of Daniel." JSOT, 17 (1980), 33-53.
- DiLella, Alexander A. and Louis F. Hartman. The Book of Daniel: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary. The Anchor Bible, vol. 23. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc, 1978.
- Gager, John G. Kingdom and Community: The Social World of Early Christianity. Prentice-Hall Studies in Religion Series. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975.
- Goldstein, Jonathan A. I Maccabees: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary. The Anchor Bible, vol. 41. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1976.
- Ladd, George Eldon. The Gospel of the Kingdom: Popular Expositions on the Kingdom of God. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1959.
- LaSor, William S., et. al. "Daniel." Old Testament Survey: The Message, Form, and Background of the Old Testament. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1982, pp. 659ff.
- McDowell, Josh. Daniel in the Critic's Den. San Bernadino, California: Campus Crusade for Christ International, 1979.
- Morris, Leon. Apocalyptic. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1972.
- Porteous, Norman W. Daniel. The Old Testament Library. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: The Westminster Press, 1965.
- Russell, D.S. The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic. The Old Testament Library. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: The Westminster Press, 1964.
- Snyder, Howard A. The Community of the King. Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter-Varsity Press, 1977.
- Snyder, Howard A. The Problem of Wineskins: Church Structure in A Technological Age. Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter-Varsity Press, 1975.

Young, Edward J. "Daniel." The New Bible Commentary: Revised.  
Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.,  
1970.

**DANIEL CHAPTER SEVEN  
AND A BRIEF LOOK AT OUR CULTURAL HANDICAPS  
IN APPROPRIATING DANIEL'S VISION**

**by**

**Joseph B. Bustillos**

**A Paper Submitted to Dr. James T. Butler  
of the School of Theology**

**of Fuller Theological Seminary**

**OT 504: Old Testament Writings**

**March 6<sup>th</sup>**

**1985**

DANIEL CHAPTER SEVEN:  
PART I: EXEGESIS

INTRODUCTION

There are many problems to be dealt with in exegeting the book of Daniel. And as I begin this paper I would like to bring the major ones to the foreground. Paramount to developing a balanced exegesis of Daniel is the need to contend with the theological presuppositions regarding supernaturalism and one's understanding of Inerrancy. Because of the nature of the book one's attitude towards these theological concepts must be openly taken into account before one begins one's study. To some the idea of a biblical book containing six "edifying stories" (midrashic, fictional tales) and several so-called prophetic visions that are really nothing more than vaticinia ex eventu<sup>1</sup> would not violate their conception of Inerrancy (in this case, the concept of supernaturalism is neither here nor there). To others this would seem to be an open denial of the Faith.<sup>2</sup> It is not the purpose, however, of this paper to bolster either

---

<sup>1</sup> Alexander A. DiLella and Louis F. Hartman, The Book of Daniel, The Anchor Bible, vol. 23 (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1978), pp. 3 & 46.

<sup>2</sup>"Now it should be clearly understood that even a partial acceptance of this radical theory concerning the composition of Daniel carries with it grave implications as to the foundations of the Christian faith," Josh McDowell, Daniel in the Critic's Den (San Bernadino, California: Campus Crusade for Christ International, 1979), p. 2.

perspectives. My purpose is to present the message of the seventh chapter of Daniel and to let the answers to our questions fall where they will.

Another problem in dealing with Daniel is one of not having sufficient historical data available on this period of history. Because this is a consistent reality (practically all of the Old Testament narratives fall under this umbrella) one has to maintain an open attitude toward the text's self-testimony and weigh whatever external evidence that there is carefully. A final problem in exegeting the book of Daniel is the overwhelming sense that one is attempting to empty an ocean with a single thimble. The sheer number of works published relating to this subject, plus the breadth of opinions voiced, plus the extremely limited amount of time available to examine the evidence has the tendency of placing one somewhere between "enlightened humility" and complete confusion. It is with all of this in mind that I add my insights to a subject that has fully employed an army of scholars who have probably forgotten more than I shall ever comprehend.

### **STRUCTURE**

The book of Daniel can be divided along two lines. The first would be the book's bilingual nature: 1:1-2:4a and 8:1-12:13 is in Hebrew while 2:4b-7:28 is in Aramaic.<sup>3</sup> The second line of division is between basic literary sections: 1:1-6:28 is

---

<sup>3</sup>DiLella p. 14. DiLella presents a theory that the whole book was originally written in Aramaic and later switch to its present H-A-H format to insure the books inclusion into the Canon.

essentially narrative and 7:1-12:13 contains prophetic visions (some would add Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter 2).

**OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL**  
**PART I: THE STORIES**

Hebrew:

I. PROLOGUE: THE SETTING (1:1-21)

---

Aramaic:

- II. THE NATIONS AND THE MOST HIGH GOD (2:1-7:28)
  - AO. Nebuchadnezzar dreams of four kingdoms and of God's kingdom (chapter 2).
  - BO. Nebuchadnezzar the tyrant sees God's servants rescues (chapter 3).
  - CO. Judgement of Nebuchadnezzar (chapter 4).
  - Cl. Judgement on Belshazzar (chapter 5).
  - Bl. Darius the Mede sees Daniel rescued (chapter 6).

**PART II: THE VISIONS**

- Al. Daniel has a vision of four kingdoms and of God's kingdom (chapter 7).
- 

Hebrew:

- III. DANIEL'S VISION OF THE RAM AND THE HE-GOAT (chapter 8).
- IV. DANIEL'S PRAYER AND THE VISION OF THE 70 "WEEKS" (chapter 9).
- V. VISION OF THE HEAVENLY MESSENGER AND HIS FINAL REVELATION (chapters 10 through 12).<sup>4</sup>

Some have felt that the obvious divisions between the Hebrew and the Aramaic sections as well as between the narrative and prophetic-visions section point to multiple authors stretched out over a long period of time (possibly one writer sometime after the sixth century recording the exploits of Daniel in the foreign courts and then others adding the second century visions later). Baldwin feels that the very structure of the book points to one author (she thinks sixth century). She bases this on the echoing

---

<sup>4</sup>Adapted from Joyce G. Baldwin, Daniel, The Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, vol. 21 (Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter Varsity Press, 1978), p. 75.

(chaistic) structure of the chapters. Chapters two and seven present the Four Empires motif, chapters three and six portray the rescuing of God's servants at the hands of Gentile monarchs, and finally chapters four and five deal with the judgement of God on Gentile rulers (chapters eight through twelve expand on the Four Empire motif).<sup>5</sup>

Chapter seven, itself, stands as an intersection between both the language structures and the literary structures of the book. This chapter stands as a unit much like the book. The progression of thought and the weaving of subject-matter binds the chapter together as a unit.<sup>6</sup>

#### OUTLINE OF DANIEL CHAPTER 7

- I. DREAM OF THE FOUR BEASTS
  - A. Introduction (vss 1-3)
  - B. FIRST BEAST: "the Lion" (vs 4)
    - 1. eagles wings (torn off and . . .)
    - 2. stood on its feet like a man
    - 3. heart like a man.
  - C. SECOND BEAST: "the Bear" (vs 5)
    - 1. raised up on one side
    - 2. three ribs in its teeth
    - 3. commanded to eat until it's full.
  - D. THIRD BEAST: "the Leopard" (vs 6)
    - 1. four wings (like a bird's)
    - 2. four heads
    - 3. given authority.
  - E. FOURTH BEAST: "the Terrifying Unnamed Beast" (vss 7-8)
    - 1. large iron teeth
    - 2. crushed and devoured, trampled what was left
    - 3. ten horns
      - a. a little horn
        - 1) uprooted three kings

---

<sup>5</sup>Baldwin, pp. 59ff.

<sup>6</sup>As a non-Hebraist I am at a disadvantage in finding seams in the text. Some scholars find an interpolation behind every change of subject, eg., Norman W. Porteous, Daniel, The Old Testament Library, (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: The Westminster Press, 1965), p. 96, first paragraph.

- 2) eyes of a man
  - 3) spoke boastfully.
- F. HEAVENLY COURT: "The Ancient of Days" (vss 9-12)
  - 1. on his throne
    - b. white clothing/hair
    - c. flaming presence
    - d. the throng around the throne
  - 2. judgement (court seated and books opened)
    - a. fourth beast slain (with little horn) and thrown into the fire.
    - b. other beasts stripped of their power, but allowed to remain.
- G. An Everlasting Kingdom (vss 13-14)
  - 1. The Son of Man
    - a. with the clouds of heaven
    - b. led into the presence of the Ancient of Days
    - c. receives the Kingdom
      - 1) authority, glory sovereignty over all peoples, nations
      - 2) everlasting dominion (never destroyed)
    - d. worshipped by men of every language.

## II. THE INTERPRETATION OF THE DREAM (vss 15-28)

- A. Daniel troubled, asks "one standing there" for an interpretation (vss 15-18)
  - 1. Four Beasts = Four Kingdoms
  - 2. "saints of the Most High" will receive the everlasting "kingdom"
- B. Questions about the Fourth Beast (vss 19-22)
  - 1. reasons for concern about fourth beast
    - a. different from the others
      - 1) iron teeth and bronze claws
      - 2) left no survivors
    - b. ten horns, the little horn
      - 1) defeating the saints
      - 2) Ancient of Days delivers them and gives them the kingdom
- C. Answers about the Fourth Beast and the Everlasting Kingdom (vss 23-27)
  - 1. Fourth Beast
    - a. Fourth Beast=fourth kingdom
    - b. it will devour the whole earth
    - c. ten horns=ten kings
    - d. the tenth king
      - 1) subdues three kings
      - 2) speaks out against the Most High
      - 3) oppresses the saints and the Temple Cult
  - 2. The Everlasting Kingdom
    - a. the court is set (judgement)
      - 1) tenth king (of the Fourth kingdom) is overthrown and destroyed
      - 2) the kingdom is given to the saints, the people of the Most High
        - a) "sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven"

- b) everlasting kingdom
- 3) all rulers will worship and obey "him"
- D. Daniel is troubled by the matter but keeps it to himself.

A verse by verse analysis (actually theme by theme) will be addressed when I deal with the language of the text.

## GENRE

The issue of the genre of chapter seven on the surface appears to be a simple one. All voices seem to concur that what we have before us is Apocalyptic literature.<sup>7</sup> All seems well and good until someone asks what we mean by Apocalyptic literature.<sup>8</sup> It degenerates even further when the question is asked regarding the origin or relationship between Apocalyptic literature and the rest of Scripture. Norman Porteous writes with regards to the book of Daniel and "mythical search for the origin of the genre" in Scripture:

Perhaps the wisest course is to take the Book of Daniel as a distinctive piece of literature with a clearly defined witness of its own, and to take note of the various ways in which it borrows from and is coloured by the earlier prophetic literature, the Wisdom literature and the Psalms and has its successors in the apocalypses, though these often exhibit an extravagance and a fantastic imagination which prominent in the Book of Daniel.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup>Baldwin pp. 46ff, DiLella pp. 62ff.

<sup>8</sup>Leon Morris, Apocalyptic, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1972). This whole book (101 pages) is a survey of what is meant by "Apocalyptic literature."

<sup>9</sup>Porteous p. 16.

## LANGUAGE

In checking the number of times a word was used in the English text of chapter seven (NIV) I didn't find anything that seemed out of the ordinary. The word "Beast(s)" occurred thirteen times, "Horn(s)" occurred eleven time, "Kingdom(s)" occurred ten times and "King(s)" occurred all of four times.

The theme of night visions or dreams cross references very strongly with the stories of Joseph in the Egyptian court (Gen 37:1-11, 40:1-41:40, note the possible influence of Wisdom literature with reference to Daniel's court experiences)<sup>10</sup> and Zechariah's night visions (Zech 1:8ff).

Regarding one of the more difficult verses to understand, Baldwin and Hartman both note that the bear that "was raised up on one of its sides" in verse five "makes no sense, and should be seen to be standing on its hind legs."<sup>11</sup> With regards to verses four and five Hartman continues by noting a theory proposed by H.L. Ginsberg:

Ginsberg recognized:. . . that in the description of the first two beasts, the words which the MT uses in reference to the lion, "It raised one end upright, to stand on two feet like a man" (in vs. 4 of MT), really belong to the description of the bear; and the words that the MT

uses in reference to the bear, "It had three tusks in its mouth [between its teeth], and it was given the command: 'Up, devour much flesh!'" (in vs. 5 of MT), really belong to the description of the

---

<sup>10</sup>DeLella pp. 55-61.

<sup>11</sup>Baldwin p. 138, Hartman p. 205. Note: Louis Hartman worked on the commentary for chapters one through nine before passing away, and Dilella finished up the book. That's why, though I'm refering to the same commentary (The Anchor Bible), I list Hartman's name instead of DiLella's.

lion. . ."12

One of the most heatedly debated themes presented in this chapter is the "Son of Man" passage which begins in verse thirteen. Baldwin and DiLella devote a full section on the subject.<sup>13</sup> McDowell, in typical Fundamentalist fashion, pins the full validity of the Christian Faith on whether the phrase refers to Jesus Christ or not (and of course it does).<sup>14</sup> The consensus seems to be that the phrase is primarily used in a generic sense to address one as a human being, a "son of man" or even "son of Adam." DiLella goes even further and identifies the "son of man" as Israel (this is largely because the "saints of the Most High" are said to receive the kingdom in verse twenty-seven whereas the recipient(s) of the kingdom in verse fourteen).<sup>15</sup> The value of the term, then, if it is to be understood in its adopted in a Christological sense is a picture of Christ's identification and relationship with mankind: "He says, 'I will declare your name to my brothers; in the presence of the congregation I will sing your praises.'" (Heb 2:12)

One last thing to note is a pattern found in this chapter which is Daniel's desire to know the identity of the Fourth Beast

---

<sup>12</sup>H.L Ginsberg Studies in Daniel; "The Composition of the Book of Daniel," VT 4 (1954), pp. 5-23, 63-75, as quoted by Hartman p. 209.

<sup>13</sup>Baldwin pp. 148-154, DiLella pp. 85-102 & 218-219.

<sup>14</sup>McDowell p. 3. He seems to forget that proper hermeneutics require an interpretation that is at least remotely appreciable by the author's original audience.

<sup>15</sup>DiLella pp. 85-102.

and the Angel's persistent emphasis on the Everlasting kingdom that will be given to the Son of Man/Saints of the Most High.

### THE EMPIRES STRIKE BACK (The Who's Who of Daniel Chapter Seven)

This portion of the assignment has the strange aura about it like the feeling one gets at a carnival booth during a nervous blind date. "Here you go, son. Here's the five ping-pong balls, now let's see if you can get all of them to fit on the rims of those four milks bottles over there." Nothing like a little "Theological Musical Chairs."

The task of identifying the four kingdoms symbolized by Daniel's vision of four beasts is one usually left to Dispensationalists or those unfortunate individuals (not necessarily Dispensationalists) in the third year of their sentence to Purgatory. Nonetheless I will attempt to identify the indecipherable with the unknowable. Listed below are the two major (i.e., popular) hypotheses followed by two good shots in the dark:

#1: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. This set up is favored by Baldwin and McDowell.<sup>16</sup> On the plus side it seems to correspond to Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter two, it follows the known chronology of the four empires (i.e., Daniel didn't screw up his history), and it tends to uphold the prophetic nature of chapter eleven. On the minus side it leaves us without a clue about who the "Little Horn" is in chapter seven (but

---

<sup>16</sup>Baldwin p. 147, McDowell pp. 22ff.

that's the Anti-Christ anyway, so who cares?).

#2: Babylon, Media, Persia and Greece. This view is favored by Hartman and Porteous.<sup>17</sup> On the plus side it seems to correspond to Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter two, we know who the "Little Horn" is, and it fits the book's emphasis of events that transpired during the second and third centuries (chapter eleven). On the minus side it makes the author look like he doesn't know his own history.

#3a: Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia and Greece. This option is proposed by yours truly for the following reasons: a. Both DiLella and Baldwin quote J.W. Swain regarding a theory about a "Four World Empires" motif that was prevalent view of history in Daniel's day,<sup>18</sup> thus A, B, M-P, G fits the four empire motif just as well as B, M, P, G or B, M-P, G, R; b. Conversely, if one of the purposes of the vision is to show God's sovereignty in the affairs of kings and kingdoms the idea that the first kingdom had been supplanted at the time the vision was given doesn't hurt the message; c. Nothing in this chapter indicates that the kingdoms must parallel those in chapter two, nor that Babylon has to be the first kingdom (which follows the original motifs inclusion of Assyria); d. The identity of the little horn is less of a mystery; e. It retains the "historical" integrity of Daniel's chronology; f. And nothing in chapters seven or eight indicates that Medo-Persia and Greece have to be beasts two and three

---

<sup>17</sup>DiLella pp. 29ff, Porteous pp. 45ff.

<sup>18</sup>J.W. Swain, "The Theory of the Four Monarchies: Opposition History under the Roman Empire," Classical Philology 35 (1940), pp 1-21 as quoted in Baldwin p. 38, and DiLella p. 31.

respectively (contrary to Baldwin, p. 147). On the minus side it seems to contradict the kingdoms identified in chapter two,<sup>19</sup> and to my knowledge no scholar holds to this position.

#3b: Babylon, Media, Medo-Persia and Greece. This view is held by the same multitude that holds to #3a. On the plus side it is the same as #3a with the addition: g. Nothing in chapter seven negates the idea of overlapping "empires."

### CONCLUSIONS

The theme that continually echoes throughout the course of this book is strongly vocalized by the "Three Jewish Children" before they were pitched into Nebuchadnezzar's furnace in chapter three and the Revealing Angel in chapter seven (respectively):

O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up. - Daniel 3:16-18

He [the little horn] will speak against the Most High and oppress his saints and try to change the set times and the laws. The saints will be handed over to him for a time, times and half a time. But the court will sit, and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever. Then

---

<sup>19</sup>In defence of this apparent contradiction, the use of symbols and images within a single literary unit are often multireferential (though this is not true in the book of Daniel) but to find it used between two distinct literary units should not present any problems (consider Christ's use of symbols in his Kingdom parables; I know dispensationalists understand the symbols to be unireferential, but that shows a poor understanding of simile). See DiLella pp. 89ff on the use of symbols in the Song of Man passages (also Morris pp.36ff and D.S. Russell, The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic, The Old Testament Library, (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: The Westminster Press, 1965), pp. 122-127).

the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him.  
- Daniel 7:25-27

DANIEL CHAPTER SEVEN:  
PART II: REFLECTION:

A Brief Look At The Our Cultural Handicaps  
In Appropriating Daniel's Visions Today

"Cruisin' down the highway late one night  
thinkin' 'bout the world and the shape it's in  
Nation against nation, military might  
thankful for the peace that I have within.

"Too many people love to hate each other,  
the love of many is growing cold  
We should be honoring our fathers and mother  
as it is written, it all unfolds.

"But it's alright!  
Just like a rocket, I'll be flyin' high,  
Just like a shooting star, racin' through the sky.

". . . it's alright!  
Jesus is coming, He's coming for me  
He's gonna pick me up in His arms,  
He's gonna set me free --- Alright!"<sup>20</sup>

The plight of the People of God, whether it was during the Exile of the sixth century in Mesopotamia or their second century Holocaust at the hands of Antiochus Epiphanies IV, they were bent under a burden that generated a different spirit or cry from the one found in the song listed above.

"Jerusalem was uninhabited, like a desert;  
not one of her children entered or came out.

The sanctuary was trampled on,  
and foreigners were in the citadel;  
it was a habitation of Gentiles.

Joy had disappeared from Jacob,  
and the flute and the harp were silent."

- 1 Maccabees 3:45

As they saw the Temple burn to the ground and found themselves in a foreign land, they tasted the salt as wave upon foreign wave

---

<sup>20</sup>John & Lynda Mehler, & Billy Batstone, Alright, copyright 1982, Maranatha!Music.

tossed them deeper into chaos and further from the Beautiful Land. It was not the smoke from some nebulous distant fire that they feared but the burning inside of them that said they had been abandoned.

"Why have you rejected us forever, O God?  
Why does your anger smolder against the sheep of your pasture?  
Remember the people you purchased of old,  
the tribe you redeemed as your inheritance ---  
Mount Zion, where you dwelt."  
- Psalm 74: 1-2

It was now over fifty years since Daniel had been deported to Babylon. And one night he has a dream, a strange vision filled with carnivorous beasts. He finds himself understandably disturbed. The reality of his exile has now invaded his dreams. From God he seeks meaning to these chaotic smokings of his subconsciousness. And like a Psalm of Lament his dream pours out suffering but God responds with words of ultimate hope and assurance. No real word about when, just the assurance that one day . . .

In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.  
- Daniel 7:13-14

We turn the page and find Contemporary Christianity in Southern California. We are now fifteen years removed from being the social rejects that we were in '60s and today we seem to find ourselves becoming important social movers (all the while we absentmindedly hope to vacate this planet before it blows up. "Beam me up Scotty, this planet sucks.") There must be a certain

madness in us that makes us think that we can look into Daniel's visions and understand various things, such as the soon coming discovery of oil in the land of Israel or that Iran and Lybia will cause such an imbalance of power in the Middle East that Russia will attack Israel.<sup>21</sup> Perhaps in our sincere desire to see the meaningfulness in every bit of the Word of God we have overlooked what made it meaningful to the original recipients. Perhaps there was a time when we could understand the longings and frustrations in Daniel's heart, the thing that drove him to his knees in chapter nine. Maybe back in the '60s when we saw society as a kind of cardboard Babylon that was heaping war and destruction on an innocent race of people that didn't care this way or that about Capitalism and Communism, maybe then we caught a glimpse of what Daniel longed for. But now . . . now I find too often that we really do not stand apart from Society, all we do now is caricature it as it does us.

I was a part of the generation that persistently asked, "When will be the time of your coming?" I have the unwholesome feeling that those of my contemporaries that are still calling themselves Christians<sup>22</sup> have yet to hear the biblical answer to

---

<sup>21</sup>If I could document those last two statements I don't know that I would. The first one I heard on a Christian radio station and the second one I just made up (which means that if it should happen, remember you read about it here first). Excursis: Why would Russia invade Israel anyway? Are they having a shortage of rocks or is this their way of saying "We miss you" to the Russian Jews that migrated to Israel? Oh . . . Never mind.

<sup>22</sup>John Gager has something to say about the short lifespan of Millennialistic movements and how they either die out or give way to other concerns. John G. Gager, Kingdom and Community: The

that question that was so close to our hearts.

It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.  
- Acts 1:7-8

Sometimes it seem like "a great chasm has been fixed between" us and Daniel, a chasm "not made by human hands." Whether we like it or not, with our IBM Personal Computers<sup>tm</sup> and our two cars per family upbringings, we are more than just centuries away from Daniel and his strange visions. You see, in our preoccupation to develop eschatological time-lines and discern the signs of the times and to just plain try to guarantee that we get a seat on that plane that'll be leaving this place when the planet blows up, we forget that Daniel (or even the Apocalypse of John) is essentially about God acting in the course of human history and that his message to us even in the midst of loss and human suffering is one of joy and the fulfillment of his perfect will.

Maybe I've made too much about our cultural differences; Cultures are just human expressions of a collection of basic human beliefs, and the Word of God is something that goes way beyond all that. But the things is that we are still in the midst of it. "We see through a glass darkly" which has a way of

---

Social World of Early Christianity, Prentice-Hall Studies in Religion Series, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975).

distorting our vision and making this thing so confusing.

So in the midst of our sufferings, as in the midst of theirs, the Word of the Lord to us, the Children of His Covenant, is: "Come to me all you who are weak and heavy laden and I will give you rest."

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Baldwin, Joyce G. Daniel: An Introduction & Commentary. Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, vol. 21. Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter-Varsity Press, 1978.
- Collins, John J. Daniel, With An Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature. The Forms of the Old Testament Literature, vol. 20. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1984.
- Davies, Philip R. "Eschatology in the Book of Daniel." JSOT, 17 (1980), 33-53.
- DiLella, Alexander A. and Louis F. Hartman. The Book of Daniel: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary. The Anchor Bible, vol. 23. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc, 1978.
- Gager, John G. Kingdom and Community: The Social World of Early Christianity. Prentice-Hall Studies in Religion Series. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975.
- Goldstein, Jonathan A. I Maccabees: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary. The Anchor Bible, vol. 41. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1976.
- Ladd, George Eldon. The Gospel of the Kingdom: Popular Expositions on the Kingdom of God. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1959.
- LaSor, William S., et. al. "Daniel." Old Testament Survey: The Message, Form, and Background of the Old Testament. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1982, pp. 659ff.
- McDowell, Josh. Daniel in the Critic's Den. San Bernadino, California: Campus Crusade for Christ International, 1979.
- Morris, Leon. Apocalyptic. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1972.
- Porteous, Norman W. Daniel. The Old Testament Library. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: The Westminster Press, 1965.
- Russell, D.S. The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic. The Old Testament Library. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: The Westminster Press, 1964.
- Snyder, Howard A. The Community of the King. Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter-Varsity Press, 1977.
- Snyder, Howard A. The Problem of Wineskins: Church Structure in A Technological Age. Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter-Varsity Press, 1975.

Young, Edward J. "Daniel." The New Bible Commentary: Revised.  
Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.,